

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6482

As Passed House:

February 28, 1996

Title: An act relating to veterans' benefits.

Brief Description: Providing for veterans' preferences.

Sponsors: Senators Winsley, Haugen, Rasmussen and Oke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Government Operations: 2/21/96, 2/23/96 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/96, 93-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Reams, Chairman; Cairnes, Vice Chairman; Goldsmith, Vice Chairman; Rust, Ranking Minority Member; Scott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Conway; R. Fisher; Hargrove; Honeyford; Hymes; Mulliken; Scheuerman; D. Schmidt; Van Luven and Wolfe.

Staff: Charlie Murphy (786-7135).

Background: By state law the Legislature has afforded certain military veterans various benefits, preferences, and credits: in competitive examinations for public employment at the state and local level, credit for military services of fireman and policeman under certain situations, public employment and civil service retirement credits, free license plates to certain disabled veterans and ex-prisoners of war, and financial relief to certain veterans and/or their families.

The definition under state law of a "veteran" is key to determining who may qualify for these legislatively authorized credits, benefits, and preferences. This definition has not been updated for some years and currently fails to recognize the more recent armed conflicts for which campaign badges or medals have been or will be awarded under federal law.

Summary of Bill: The definition of a "veteran" includes, but is not limited to, an individual who has participated in the Persian Gulf War, Lebanon Crisis, Grenada Invasion, and the operations in Panama, Somalia, and Haiti. Clarifying adjustments to the veterans' preference in public state and local employment competition and certain promotional examinations are provided. The veteran is given a longer time period, 10 years, from release from active military to claim these certain preferences under law.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: It has been 20 years since the Legislature fully updated veterans' preference law. It needs to be done.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Winsley, prime sponsor.